

Trabajo Fin de Grado

Christopher Nolan and time: The Intrinsic use of Time that
Revolutionized the Film Industry

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is centred on the analysis of time in Christopher Nolan's filmography, more specifically in the films *Memento* (2000), *Inception* (2010) and *Interstellar* (2014). Time is used by the director in order to portray mind games and the trauma of the main characters through the use of mise-en-scène, camera movement, point of view and the different narrative lines portrayed in the stories. The main characters are the ones that time focuses on the most, since it is their trauma that the film wants to show. Regarding mental games and puzzles created from different timelines or jumps in time, the function of these is to create confusion in the viewer regarding what moment in the story the film is and what might happen to the characters. With the use of different examples from each film, the dissertation shows that for Nolan time is an essential tool in his work, since it is in charge of guiding the audience to a clearer conclusion about the films' intention and a better understanding of the characters' mental state.

RESUMEN

Esta tesis se centra en el análisis del tiempo en la filmografía de Christopher Nolan, más concretamente en las películas *Memento* (2000), *Origen* (2010) e *Interstellar* (2014). El tiempo es utilizado por el director para retratar los juegos mentales y el trauma de los personajes principales a través del uso de la puesta en escena, el movimiento de cámara, el punto de vista y las diferentes líneas narrativas retratadas en las historias. Los personajes principales son en los que más se enfoca el tiempo, ya que es su trauma lo que la película quiere mostrar. En cuanto a los juegos mentales y acertijos creados a partir de diferentes líneas de tiempo o saltos en el tiempo, la función de estos es crear confusión en el espectador sobre en qué momento de la historia se encuentra la película y qué les puede pasar a los personajes. Con el uso de diferentes ejemplos de cada película, se demuestra que para Nolan el tiempo es una herramienta fundamental en su obra, ya que

es el encargado de guiar al espectador hacia una conclusión más clara sobre la intención de las películas y una mejor comprensión del estado mental de los personajes.

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Introduction

The director's name is one of the principal elements of a film when evaluating an oeuvre. Each film has its unique director's touch which makes them stand out from other works and each director has his/her preferences and fixations which are reflected in their films. One of the most known directors is Christopher Nolan, who usually focuses on intrinsic plots which are characterized by their complex narrative and their difficulty in understanding them and are well known for his use of *misé-en-scène* and camera movement. Christopher Nolan is known for providing the most immersive experience for the audience in his films. (Olson p. 44). In many of the director's interviews, he mentions that this is one of his favourite characteristics, making his audience feel immersed in his works. This characteristic can be observed in many of his films, with the use of the camera and its different angles or the structure of the narrative the director makes clear his intentions, he wants his audience to feel they are part of the film. Nolan's famous uses of non-chronological narrative structures are designed to enhance the audience's experience of the character's point of view (Olson p. 44)

Christopher Nolan has been analysed by many critics and has always been positioned as an auteur. The theory of the auteur is based on the idea of an independent director working within the Hollywood system, bringing artistic, and intellectual sensibilities to what is considered a basic genre (Hill-Parks p. 17). Christopher Nolan fits perfectly into this theory because all of his works contain those nuances that make them completely distinct from other films of the same genre since he usually uses his unique touch to give more depth to his plots and characters. Many films from other directors that share Nolan's genre do not spend much time developing an intrinsic plot while Nolan without much equipment has created many successful blockbusters. This is one of the principal reasons why this director is considered to be one of the best, as he is able to

create masterpieces without having to follow the structure already established in previous films of other directors from the same genre. Nolan constantly displays an artistic signature in his films, transforming the director into the primary source of artistry in a set of films (Hill-Parks p.18). The role of the director in a film is very important, depending on what elements they focus the audience will centre their attention on a certain message and Nolan is obsessed with having his audience endure a different kind of visualization in a film, giving them new perspectives and ideas. As mentioned before Nolan wanted his audience to have an immersive experience and when it came to pursuing it, he prevented using meta cinematic images. Any kind of reference to cinema was banned by the director as he thought it would threaten the spectator's immersion by making them aware of experiencing the film (Olson p. 46).

Nolan's hard work on avoiding explicit meta-cinematic images is embodied in his references to other forms of narratives. When his films explore and comment on aspects of narrative cinema, therefore, they do so not directly through metaphor, conceit, and allegory (Olson p. 44). The film's structure is an example of how the director focuses on the immersion of the audience, the way in which the plot is developed exhibits his clear intention of avoiding explicit references to cinema. The intrinsic storylines in his work are created specifically to lead the audience to a new experience. Nolan did not invent a new genre; however, he found a way of modifying it to his liking. For Nolan, the act of controlling our perception of events becomes the site of a game (Ní Fhlainn p. 148), each character and scene are consciously written in order to provide this control over the director's audience. The principal tool in Nolan's films which provides the director full control of what he wants to transmit is time.

This essay will focus on Christopher Nolan's use of time, more specifically, I will explore how time is portrayed and what it symbolises. Science and the mind (memory

and dreams) are mainly used by the director in order to represent time while this symbolises the trauma of the main characters. Moreover, Christopher Nolan's work is complicated and abstract, and with the use of time, he is also able to construct mind games and puzzles. Three of Nolan's most famous films are going to be analysed in order to demonstrate how natural or real-time is fragmented by the montage and editing of an image: *Memento* (2000), *Inception* (2010), and *Interstellar* (2014). The methodology that I will be using is the formal and narrative analysis of time, how it is arranged through the use of *misé-en-scène*, point of view of the characters, camera movement, and the different narrative lines portrayed in the stories. With each of these elements, I will explain how Nolan has designed the use of time in each of the three films in order to represent both the traumatic events of the characters and mind games.

Christopher Nolan and time.

Christopher Nolan is one of the most known film directors and what makes him stand out are his elaborate plots and central characters. His interest in psychological dramas, his repeated experiments with narrative form, and his ongoing exploration of time, memory, and identity have now become established traits. (Joy p.7) Moreover, Nolan's films are based on misdirection and lies; like Nolan's protagonists, we wish to believe the palatable lie over the unbearable truth in his films (Ní Fhlainn p. 148). Nolan uses different themes to portray time and his multiple oeuvres demonstrate his variety in time illustration. One of Nolan's first works is *Memento* (2000), this film is constructed fragmentarily, there is no linear narrative because it uses the main character's short-term memory to create time lapses. The mind is the central element used in this film to play with the conception of time. *Inception* uses the same component as *Memento*; but it uses dreams. There are different time dimensions represented in distinct dream levels and with the use of slow

motion and camera movement, the audience can differentiate them. Nolan's films not only focus on the idea of the mind, but the director also gives attention to the conception of space travels. An example is *Interstellar*, centred around the topic of space, uses the idea of travelling through space to recreate different timelines found in the various universes that the film shows us. Christopher Nolan uses space elements (wormholes, space traveling, and diverse universes) and the topic of the mind (fragmented memory and dreams) in his films when he wants to present disrupted and fragmented timelines.

Each film has its own way of representing time, whether it is with a mentally unstable character unable to locate himself in time, or with dreams, or by using space travel, but they all have one thing in common, a specific reason why the director uses them: to create mind games or manifest the trauma of the main characters. Nolan's well-constructed plots lead its audience to find themselves solving puzzles in order to follow the complex storyline. The principal theme which helps the director create his famous ambiguous scenarios is time, which in turn helps shape the intricate riddles and puzzles. These mind games consist principally of the fabrication of abstract scenarios difficult to grasp. The films that will be analysed later in this essay are full of mental games, normally these puzzles are created to make the viewer experience a greater immersion in the film because it requires them to pay more attention. Moreover, the enigmas represented in each film are related to the themes of identity and overcoming difficult moments as mostly every main character of Nolan's films has a psychological disorder. Nolan's filmography most of the time takes its audience inside the central character's experience, and time is also used to portray the characters' state of mind. The plots and central characters of Nolan's films regularly display symptoms of neurosis, often stemming from guilt, trauma, or some overarching sense of loss (Joy p.9). Nolan usually has an inclination for traumatised characters; so many of Nolan's central characters are

traumatised by the loss of a wife or a partner that their demise is key to the mental unravelling of the character's notion of reality (Ní Fhlainn p. 153). Trauma has always been a common theme in Nolan's works, most of his characters have gone through a traumatic event or are going through it at the moment. With the use of time the audience is able to understand when the character is suffering the consequences of his past or is at a critical moment. In *Memento* we have flashbacks of the main character's wife, exposing his trauma of losing her and in *Inception*, the wife who died appears in her husband's memories tormenting him. *Interstellar* has a main character who also suffered the loss of his wife, but in this case, his suffering is linked to his kids as he is not able to be there with them as they grow because of his job.

One thing clear is that every principal character of each film is stuck in time, but there are no clichés as there are no time travels like in the blockbuster films centred around this theme. Nolan is developing new ways of using cinema to explore different issues like identity and overcoming traumas in his characters. The director's main characters suffer from flashbacks, hallucinations, amnesia, or hyper-vigilance which is used to accentuate Nolan's obsession with the blurry representation of time and these three films are one of the best examples.

Memento

Memento, based on a short story by Jonathan Nolan, Christopher Nolan's brother, called *Memento Mori*, is one of the director's first works and is among the most famous works of Nolan. The story is centred around Leonard Shelby (Guy Pearce), who suffers from anterograde amnesia after being attacked at his house, he can no longer form new memories. At the beginning of the film, the audience is told that Leonard's wife was raped

and killed in the attack and Shelby is trying to locate the attacker to get revenge. The film's structure is hard to follow, it has a difficult script, hard to understand. For first-time viewers it is very confusing, probably more than one visualization is needed to be able to understand all the hidden messages.

It has non-linear storytelling, there are two storylines at the same time: black and white which is going forwards, and a coloured story line which goes backwards. These two different timelines of the story meet at the end of the film to create the denouement and show the audience everything that was being hidden from them during the film. Nolan's story being told in reverse is not a coincidence, for the director it was vital for the film to be narrated in that way as it helps the audience understand the main character's mind. Leonard's perspective is the key to untangling all the puzzles and riddles that the film lays out, the viewer has to work hard just to piece the story back together from the fragmented plot (Kania p. 176). Following these two timelines is very important in order to understand the character's history, the director uses various resources to make it easier for the public to follow the timeline in a certain way. The main prop used by Nolan that helps us decipher the moment in history we are in are the Polaroids, in each scene Leonard has several photographs, and depending on the moment in which he is has different amounts indicating that he is currently in different times of the film. Along with the photocards, Leonard also uses tattoos to help himself track his progress in the investigation, Nolan uses the Polaroid motif, along with body tattoos within the scene, and the alternating black and white and colour sequences to frame Leonard's time out of place and place out of time (Brislin p. 201).

Its structure is much more intricate and elegant (Kania p. 176). Part of the story remains hidden from the audience throughout the film, we have no knowledge of what happens from the incident until the film's present, an ambiguity that threatens to

systematically undermine our central judgments about the characters and their actions (Kania p. 176). It is not until the last scenes that we are able to construct this part of the story with the different hints that the director gives us of how Leonard's life was after the incident. Because we do not know part of Leonard's life, our prejudices towards the rest of the characters are different and it is thanks to the arrangement of the timeline that we are able to decipher their intentions. Nolan also uses the time to create his famous mind games, with the non-linear structure of the story it is easier for him to play with the audience's perspective on the development of the film. These mind games consist of creating riddles and puzzles to decipher the correct arrangement of the story. Nolan recreates these enigmas with the use of time jumps or mixing timelines with the introduction of another parallel story with Sammy Jenkins (Stephen Tobolowsky). The audience must be very attentive to be able to connect every timeline to give sense to the film, but Nolan did it so well that you need more than one visualization, you can never find out where you are in the timeline, because there is no timeline (Brislin p. 200).

The puzzles are not the only element highlighted in the film; the trauma of the character is another feature of which time is also in charge of narrating. There is a never-ending loop of grief (Perdigao p. 121) in which the main character is trapped. Leonard's obsession with avenging his wife is appreciated throughout the film and time is used to emphasize this with the use of flashbacks which only goes back to the incident as it is the last thing Leonard remembers. Moreover, time is the one in charge of demonstrating the unreliability of Leonard's words, he shows us with flashbacks and memories the mental and emotional instability of the character. Sammy Jenkins was created by Leonard to get rid of his guilt by killing his wife, as in the end it is revealed that the real murderer of Leonard's wife is himself, by accident, as she is the one who repeatedly asks him to inject her insulin to confirm her husband's condition. Once again time is used as a guide to the

truth, with flashbacks and jumps in time, little by little, not only the mental puzzles are spun, but also all the trauma that the character suffers is exposed. He is not able to bring his wife back to life, but he is able to remember the trauma that drives him to seek vengeance, and, at least superficially, closure (Perdigao p. 125).

Nolan's intention is to create a fragmented story using the time to exhibit not only his hard-to-grasp mind puzzles but the character's state of mind. After Leonard finds out he had already killed the one who assaulted his wife at their house and that she committed "suicide" he tricks himself into believing he is still tracking the bad guy. Time in the film seems to be infinite, he is trapped in his own lies, time is finite for Leonard, with the essential timeline of events laid out in black and white, but infinitely repeated in a world of color (Brislin p. 201). Even though this film seems to have a confusing or rather hard-to-understand ending it is evident that Nolan leaves nothing unexplained, but it is the viewer who must take charge of connecting all the dots. It tells the story of a character who unable to overcome his wife's death decides to create a never-ending loop of vengeance, *Memento* is an intricate puzzle with a single correct solution (Kania p. 177).

Inception

Written and directed by Christopher Nolan, *Inception* is a science /fiction original film based on an original idea developed by Nolan which took eight to ten years for the director to write. It is the story of Dom Cobb (Leonardo DiCaprio), a thief who is able to get inside people's dreams and steal their secrets. However, in one of his last missions, his objective Saito (Ken Watanabe) discovers their plans, and the operation is unsuccessful. However, Saito proposes to Cobb another job that if it succeeds, he will amend Cobb's criminal record. The mission consists of doing inception so as to implant an idea in the

subconscious of Robert Fischer (Cillian Murphy). Moreover, the film also deals with the main character's trauma with the intervention of his dead wife, Mal (Marion Cotillard), who will become a burden to the mission.

Dreams are the principal element used in the film for time manipulation. The deeper the characters get into the different levels of dreaming the slower time gets for the invader in that consciousness. This is the main dilemma for the film and the characters. The film explains that five minutes in the real world represent an hour in the dream world, the second level down is three months, and the final level is the most dangerous, Limbo, as it is endless and is very hard to escape, Nolan makes it part of the nature of the nested dreams that they proceed at 'different speeds' (Kania p. 178). The inception is attempted in a ten-hour flight, there are different character that stays in the distinct levels of dreams: the ones that inhabit the first dream level spend a week inside, those at the second level stay for six months and then there is a third level in which the inception will take place that the characters have to spend ten years in the dream. Nolan uses the character's experience in each level to exhibit how time passes. The use of slow motion is one of the tools used by the director to compare each world of dreams, the slower they go the nearer they are to reality, this device will be later analysed in various examples.

The world of dreams is introduced by Cobb who is an expert on the creation of these spaces, and he teaches Ariadne (Elliot Page), so that the dynamics of this world are also explained to the audience. These are portrayed as labyrinths, complex structures in which the owner of the dream is in charge of the building. The duration of a dream is roughly twenty times the apparent duration of the dream (or reality) within which it occurs (Kania p. 178) and there is a constant reminder from Cobb about this characteristic as it is vital for the management of the dream world. The film portrays several dream levels and gives empathize with the last one, Limbo, which is the most dangerous as time is

endless. Nolan has set himself the challenge of telling several stories that occur simultaneously yet takes place across different lengths of time. The central puzzle of *Inception* is where exactly to draw the line between dream and reality (Kania p. 180). Slow-motion is the principal resource the director uses as a hint for the audience to be able to place each timeline. An example is seen in the final mission when the characters are forced to divide themselves into different time levels so as to be able to complete the job. Nolan tells the story of each character simultaneously and the audience is able to follow the story of each one because depending on which dream world is focusing, time is in charge of differentiating them. When the protagonists are forced to step into a deeper dream level the film uses time to inform the audience how different time passes in each level, also creating suspense in the tensest moments. This film presents us with mental games whose duties are to make us doubt whether we are in reality or in dreams. Both the characters and the audience are faced with this enigma, and time is the one in charge of raising them and also as a guide to help us identify at which level we are.

Trauma is the other important topic of the film. The main character is eaten up with guilt due to the "suicide" of his wife, on several occasions the film takes us back in time to show us Cobb's inability to overcome it. Dreams are the principal tool used by the director to demonstrate the seriousness of the matter as Mal appears in Cobb's created dream worlds destabilizing the operations. These situations happen because of Cobb's inability to overcome his grief, he has created a dream world in which his wife is still alive, and he does not want to let her go, it is an indefinite mourning. The dream worlds are linked, and grief is at the source (Perdigao p. 125). Mostly every main character in Nolan's film suffers from post-traumatic disorder which prevents them from moving forwards, in this case, Cobb is trapped in a life where he cannot see his children due to his past mistakes. At the end of the film after the operation has been successful que gets

another chance and is able to go back to his family. There is a sense of *Deja vu* as Cobb during the film went back in time inside his head repeatedly to see his children. When he finally meets them, this happens in the same place that he had been remembering and dreaming about, it is a representation of going back to the past, but this time Cobb does have the opportunity to correct what he did wrong. Time has acted as therapy for Cobb, being able to go back in time and see his last memory of his children has served to make him go ahead and complete the mission, as well as make him realize that he should forget his wife's death once and for all. Nolan with this film has shown us a completely different way of dealing with dreams. Through the use of time, the audience can understand how these worlds work. As always, this director surprises us once again with a complex and well-structured story. The combination of visual and aural creates the sense of a radically altered time escape for the audience (Brislin p. 205)

Interstellar

Christopher Nolan took his brother Jonathan's script and developed one of his most known masterpieces, *Interstellar*, which took a while to develop due to its intrinsic plot. A group of scientists and explorers, led by Cooper (Matthew McConaughey), embark on a space journey that will take them years to complete to find a place with the right conditions which could replace Earth in the future, as it can only sustain one more generation before it collapses, and start a new life there. Space travel gives the director certain freedom to distort time, with the use of science theory and the universe diverse galaxies with different timelines are found throughout the film creating complex puzzles and mind games in charge of challenging the audience.

Unlike *Memento* and *Inception*, this film does not use the time to create mental puzzles and brain teasers but instead focuses on the psychological trauma of the characters. We could expect to find a complex structure that takes us through a space trip where time is a tool that creates complicated scenes that require a lot of attention, however, through flashbacks and parallel timelines the film shows us the suffering of the characters. It is true that during the film the intrinsic explanations of how other galaxies work are explained to us, as in the scene where Romilly (David Gyasi) teaches Cooper how a wormhole works. Time in this film is perceived as something physical, Cooper through gravity and different dimensions is able to "travel back in time" and warn his daughter Murph (Jessica Chastein) of what she has to do to save the human race from extinction. In the world we know, science tells us time does exist on multiple planes. (Brislin p. 206), in the film, scientific terms are used to explain the time lags that can be found in other galaxies, as well as how Cooper was able to warn his past self, the whole film revolves around science, Nolan now invites us to look at the planes of time from the reverse perspective. (Brislin p. 206). However, although we have all these elements and scientific explanations, Nolan does not use them to develop a complex narrative as he did with *Memento*, there are two timelines at the same time, Cooper's and Murph's, but they do not focus on a complex structure, if not rather the personal relationship between them and the adversities they experience just to be able to see each other again.

Even though it is a sci-fi film, Nolan made it a personal film about family, a sci-fi plot to a personal one. Cooper's main objective is to save his family, it is the only reason why he embarked on such a dangerous journey although it is later discovered that the main idea was to create a new colony on another planet, he does not give up and he goes ahead with a plan that can save his children, so it's clear that Nolan wanted to focus on a more personal and emotional script. From the beginning of the film, you can see that it is

an emotional film about family relationships. The first scene of all shows us an older Murph remembering her life on the farm and her father, the film gives us clues about how important the father-daughter relationship is going to be. Does love transcend dimensions and time? This is the main question that the director proposes, time is precious and unlimited (Brislin p. 206). The trauma portrayed in the film is one of Cooper's fears of losing his family, not being able to save them, or seeing them again. Several scenes show us the complicated relationship between Cooper and Murph, and this is shown in the scene where Cooper, after having spent 23 years trapped on the first planet they visit (due to a time lag where an hour on the planet is seven years on Earth) starts to watch the videos that his family has left him during all this time. Only his son Tom (Timothée Chalamet / Casey Affleck) has been uploading videos regularly. Cooper realises that he has lost all relation with his children, on the one hand, Tom shows his disappointment at not receiving a response from him so he stops recording, and on the part of Murph we do not have any video of her as a child, only at the end there is one left of her all grown up, resentful of Cooper. This drastic change in the appearances of Murph and Tom due to the passage of time shows us what Cooper feared the most: not being able to be there with them and see them grow. We see time passing in the form of Cooper's daughter Murph. (Brislin p. 206), reinforcing that feeling of helplessness of Cooper being aware of the passage of time and not being able to do anything due to the complications of the trip.

After all, this film makes use of time to show the unconditional love that Cooper has for his family through parallel and continuous timelines which exhibit the passage of time in each character where you can see that they are still hoping to return, to meet again. Even though it is a film with a perfect script to create a complex narrative with a plot centred on space travel, Nolan decided to transform it into a story that reflects how a father's love for his family can transcend time in the same way that a daughter spends her

entire life solving not only the solution to the salvation of the human race but also how to be able to see his father again, who was the one who helped him find the answer. Cooper is responsible for showing audiences their discoveries in the vast universe, while Murphy tells the audiences about the changes in the earth (Xu p. 81)

Differences and similarities between *Memento*, *Inception* and *Interstellar*.

Each of these three films shows us what characteristics Christopher Nolan looks for in his works. At first glance, time is one of the elements that the director uses the most, being one of his most effective tools to represent what most characterizes Nolan: complexly structured narratives creating visual and mental puzzles. Once each one of the films has been analysed and I have observed what themes the director focuses on, in this section I will dedicate myself comparing all of them to observe what changes we can find between them and what different strategies Nolan uses to capture time.

First of all, although these movies have been directed by Christopher Nolan, they have several aspects that make them different, demonstrating the great broad spectrum that the director offers. *Memento* centres more of its attention on constructing mind puzzles with its time-lapses and jumps in time, while *Interstellar* centres more on the trauma and personal experiences of its characters. *Inception*, however, is somewhere in between, as it has moments in which the use of parallel timelines and slow motion is exclusively done to distort time and challenge the audience's visualization. It becomes clear that the main tools in Nolan's filmography that illustrate the passing of time are flashbacks, time jumps, and even the use of character aging. Moreover, the importance of time in each film is different. In *Interstellar* time really passes in comparison with *Inception*, in which time only passes in dreams, there are no repercussions in real life, and

in *Memento* time is seen as infinite since there are no repercussions if it is lost since Leonard is trapped in a loop that he created himself so as to have a goal in his life. Although they may not have a similar structure or objective, it is true that they all have several elements in common such as trauma, family issues and the most common, suspense, as one of the most important designs in the narrative, the treatment of suspense can often get much attention within the whole story (Xu p. 81).

However, although Nolan wanted to give a different approach to each of his works, after all, he always leaves his own mark. The puzzles and mind games' duty in each film is to distort reality preventing the audience in a certain way from knowing at what point in the film they are. The use of time in these films is to make it harder for the audience's visualization, but also to provoke a sense of suspense, not knowing what is going to happen and also the feeling of being lost. This theme is trauma related, since in most of the moments that we are shown of the characters suffering traumatic episodes, time is used to create suspense and tension; we do not know what is happening or what is going to happen. Viewers in each movie are completely immersed in the story, and as I have mentioned before, each one has a purpose. In the example of *Memento*, the audience is having the perspective of a person with a short-term memory unable to generate new memories since the attack he and his wife suffered. Due to this, the audience can feel everything that the main character suffers, with that representation of time, the abrupt and disorderly scene changes, we can really feel in the shoes of someone with that condition. We find the same with the other two protagonists of *Inception* and *Interstellar*, we also have their perspectives: two fathers who just want to be reunited with their families and that they would do whatever it took to ensure the safety and well-being of their family and the traumas are exposed in such a way that they make us be more involved in the film.

It can be seen that each film has a purpose, whether it is to create a fragmented story whose objective is to give a unique experience to the audience in which they must observe the use of time in order to be able to understand the hidden messages of the film or, not only the mind games created from the structure of the film are important to the director, it has also been observed that family relationships are a very recurring theme in his films, and these go hand in hand with the theme of the trauma. The passage of time plays a big role in these movies, especially in *Interstellar*, since it shows the distancing between the character and his family as time goes by. Time in these films has a similar performance, however, Nolan knew how to use it in different ways, demonstrating the great variety of ways that exist to recreate it.

Conclusion

Making people feel immersed in his films is one of Christopher Nolan's main aims. With each of his films, he shows us new perspectives and ideas, time is shown to us in a completely different way than what we were used to seeing in other films of the same style. The time in these films is quite far from the perception of real and natural time. As I have explained in the previous sections, each film has its way of playing with time and developing it in its own way. As for example, we have time in reverse, the end is shown to us at the beginning of the film, and the beginning at the end. Another creative way is with the use of dreams, which allow the director to develop discontinuous and parallel timelines. On the other hand, there are also time skips like a jump of 23 years in time forward that in the film is shown in only a few minutes. Nolan also stands out for the use of his characters' perspectives, thanks to which we are more aware of their traumas. Not only do we have access to their disturbed minds, but by being exposed to these, the

director's mind games, and intrinsic puzzles are easier to expose since by having the character's point of view we are also victims of the director's tricks.

With all these examples we can conclude that time has a specific role in Christopher Nolan's films. After having analysed three of his best films in which time is one of the most important elements of these, I have been able to conclude that Nolan deals with the same themes in his films: mind games and trauma. I have been able to observe through a few examples that the director's intention is to transport the audience to a new way of viewing cinema, to demonstrate that time can be treated in a different way, and it is a perfect tool to develop plots never seen before. Over the years, time has always been used in a certain way in cinema, never before had anyone tried to give it a specific role, a task. Through the use of mise-en-scene and camera shots, this element has been allowed to have an essential leading role in the plot of the characters, its main aim is to guide the audience through the film to let them see the hidden messages and purposes of the director. With all this it is shown that time has acquired a new facet in the cinema, thanks to Nolan this is seen as an essential element in the industry.

In my opinion, Christopher Nolan is one of the most prolific and original directors in the film industry. Thanks to his scripts and use of misé-en-scene, camera movement, point of view of the characters and the different narrative lines he has earned a great reputation among other great film directors. All his films have a plot that engages and entertains his audience, he shows us new and complex stories that have not been given before in other films. *Memento*, *Inception*, and *Interstellar* have confirmed Nolan's talent when it comes creating masterpieces, each of these films were written and produced with different objectives but with the same essence. The director has not invented a genre but has been able to give a new approach to it.

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